

Application Ser. No.: 10/512,010

Title: A DEVICE FOR CLEANING THE TEATS OF AN ANIMAL AND A MILKING
STALL INCLUDING THE DEVICE

Response to Office Action dated: August 2, 2006

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Remarks

This amendment is submitted together with a Petition for a One Month Extension of Time to respond to the Office Action dated August 2, 2006. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 6 and 17-22 presented allowable subject matter. Those claims have been rewritten, such that claim 31 is newly presented as an independent claim including the limitations of claims 1, 3 and 6, claim 32 is newly presented as an independent claim including the limitations of claims 1, 12 and 17, and claims 33 through 37 now depend directly or indirectly from claim 32 previously indicated to be allowable as recited above.

However, claims 1-26 and 29, 30 also remain in this application, claims 27 and 28 having been cancelled by this amendment. This amendment to claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom now calls for the claims to be addressed to a milking stall which includes a milking machine having teatcups to be attached to the animal to be milked as well as a teat cleaning device as more particularly set forth. It is to be understood that the term "milking stall" as used by the applicant is intended to encompass structures for the milking of animals and as described by the applicants in the introductory paragraph of the application as filed, a milking stall as used in the present application is not limited to only an enclosure for a single animal but rather encompasses a variety of kinds of milking parlours (e.g., herringbone, rotary, tandem, etc.).

As now presented, claim 1 calls for a milking stall having a teat-cleaning apparatus which is fluidically separate from the milking machine, as illustrated for example in Figs. 8 through 11. In particular, Fig. 10 shows a rotary parlour where the teat cleaning device is positioned off the rotary platform for cleaning the teats of the cows before they enter the milking boxes 80 having the milking machines 81. This presents a significant advantage over the prior art as it permits, as discussed in the application at page 3, whereby the cleaning operation may be performed on all of the teats of the animal simultaneously in comparison to past methods whereby the teats were cleaned successively (sequentially).

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In the first Office Action, claims 1-5, 7-16, 23-30 were rejected as being anticipated or obvious in view of EP 0207572 to Van der Lely (hereinafter "EP '572). This reference discloses a device having four cups to be attached to the teats of an animal to be milked. Each cup is combined and has both teat-cleaning and milking means. Thus, the EP '572 reference fails to anticipate the claims as now amended, where the teat cleaning device is separate from the milking machine and not fluidically connected to one another. The present invention as now claimed permits a cleaning function to be performed at a remote location, as shown in Figs. 8-11, for example, from the milking machine, thereby expediting the entire milking operation. This is because the teats can be cleaned within the milking stall during a time when the animal to be milked is in a holding or waiting condition, without interfering with or competing with the time when the animal is attached to the milking machine. Applicant notes that one of the references cited but not relied upon in the Office Action, US 6,098,570 to Aurik shows a separate teat-cleaning cup and a separate teatcup. However, Aurik does not show a separate teat-cleaning device and a milking machine. In Aurik, the teat cleaning cup also has an open bottom and thus there is no conduit provided for discharge of waste or spent liquid from the teat-cleaning cup. It may thus be appreciated that the limitations of the present invention calling for first and second conduit members which supply cleaning liquid and discharging waste liquid.

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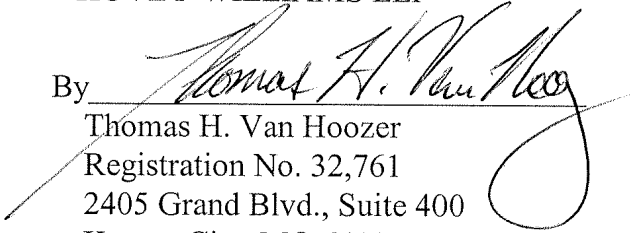
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Thus, applicant respectfully submits that the claims as now amended define over the prior art of record and place the application in condition for allowance. Such is courteously requested. Applicant petitions for a one-month extension of time to respond to this Office Action. Please deduct the amount of \$250.00 from Deposit Account No. 19-0522 for the 5 additional dependent claims. Any additional fees necessitated by this submission may be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-0522. Any issues which may be resolved by a telephone conference may be addressed to the undersigned at 1-800-445-3460.

Respectfully submitted,

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